



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Women's Peacebuilding Leadership Program (WPLP)



These eight Kenyan women are in the Women's Peacebuilding Leadership Program at Eastern Mennonite University (from left): Esther Bett, Ruth Nalyanya, Roselyne Onunga, Shamsa Omar, Carol Makanda, Fatuma Abass, Eunice Githae, and Evelyn Musee.

Funding Level:
\$590,000

Duration:
May 2012 – January 2016

Program Goals:

- increase women's skills and knowledge in peace building and leadership by completing the graduate certificate program in women's leadership
- help women apply peace building and leadership frameworks to their context
- help women design and implement peace building projects and processes
- help organizations with whom the women work or volunteer expand their sphere of influence

Program Locations:
Nationwide – Kenya and Somalia

Implementing Partner:
Eastern Mennonite University

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Women's Peacebuilding Leadership Program is a global program of the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU). It works to ensure that countries prevent, transform, and recover from conflicts at institutional, social and political levels through robust, strategic, integrated processes led by women (and men) with strong capacity for peace building leadership.

EMU offers a Women's Leadership Academic Cohort program to increase peace and stability in specific global regions by increasing the number of leaders who practice gender-inclusive peace-building leadership. The two-year program combines graduate-level course work with hands on, mentor-supported peace building field projects in the students' home regions. It culminates in the award of Graduate Certificates in Conflict Transformation. EMU seeks multiple students from targeted geographic areas to facilitate the emergence of local networks that would support each other and build a critical mass of gender-inclusive peace building leaders. Somalia and Somali border zones are among the targeted regions. Through this approach, peace-building practitioners gain the confidence and capacity to lead, utilizing the strengths of their gender unique to their local context. Although it is clear that the long-term goal is for interdependent gender-sensitive peace-building involving women and men, the reality remains that women are underrepresented in peace-building leadership in most areas of the world.

PROGRAM AREAS

The Women's Peacebuilding Leadership Program educates women in conflict analysis, prevention, and transformation through classes that focus on practice-based methodologies. Contextualized content and real-world examples experienced in the classroom are bolstered by mentored practice in the field. Through these components participants integrate content and practice with the end goal of transforming relationships and structures in ways that address the root causes of conflict at both local and global levels.

The program offers graduate-level practice-based peacebuilding

USAID Contacts:

Rosalind Wanyagi, Activity Manager
Office of Democracy, Governance and Conflict
Tel: 254- 0706-033285
Email: rwanyagi@usaid.gov

education designed to meet the needs of women in conflict zones, including: a graduate, undergraduate, or training certificate in peacebuilding leadership from the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University; cohort-based education with other women peace builders from the same country or region; two periods of residential education consisting of seven weeks in the US and two weeks in-region; a distance learning course that connects and supplements the residential education piece; and a mentoring component that enhances application of theory and practice.

PROGRAM IMPACT

Amina Abdulkadir facilitates a leadership training for girls from two sides of a border conflict.

After being fully funded by USAID to attend the Women's Peacebuilding Leadership Program at Eastern Mennonite University's Center for Justice and Peacebuilding in Harrisonburg, Virginia, Amina Abdulkadir returned home to put her skills to use in the Gal-Mudug region of Somalia.

Border conflicts have existed in the Gal-Mudug region since its establishment as an

autonomous state in 2006; most of the conflicts are centered on land, identity, and resources.

In partnership with the local organization Mudug Women Peace Committee, Amina organized and facilitated a peace leadership training for girls from both sides of the conflict-riddled border. The training focused on values, empowerment strategies, and the role of women in peacebuilding.

During the training, girls from both sides of the border became friends. Amina now reports that there is an increase in cross-border community integration. Participants in the training now also have increased capacity and increased peacebuilding knowledge with which to handle future cross-border disputes.

"The two communities in Galkio had prolonged conflict which caused separation of the town into two sides," said Amina. "The training facilitated friendship of those young girls in attendance."

Amina reports that the mentor she has as a part of her participation in WPLP has had a valuable impact on her development as a peacebuilder. In part because of this, Amina took on the role of mentoring one of the members of the Mudug Women Peace Committee. Amina hopes that by mentoring budding peacebuilders, she will be helping to increase women's voices and leadership capacity in situations of conflict.

